dated 19.7.2004, has directed the Welfare Commissioner to disburse the unspent amount to the persons whose claims have been settled, on pro-rata basis having due regard to the number of claims settled, unsettled and pending. According to information received from the Office of the Welfare Commissioner, the work of disbursement of compensation on pro-rata basis is likely to start from 1st October, 2004.

Revival of Hindustan Antibiotic Limited

1807. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revive the Hindustan Antibiotic Limited Pimpri, India's first pencillin manufacturing unit;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is likely to be revived?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a to (c) Recently, the Finance Minister, in the Budget Speech of 2004-05, has announced to provide financial support for the restructuring of the Hindustan Antibiotics Limited (HAL), Pimpri. Thereafter, the HAL, has submitted a revised Draft Rehabilitation Scheme which envisages infusion of additional funds from the Government for the revival of the Company. It will not be possible to give a time frame for the revival of the company as it depends on the sanctioning of Rehabilitation Scheme by the BIFR which is a time consuming process.

High retail prices of drgus and medicines

1808. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that retail prices of drugs and medicines are being labeled at over 20 per cent of the cost of manufacture and packaging; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken or being taken to check and regulate the drug prices to protect the ailing and suffering humanity against such exploitation?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Prices of Scheduled drugs and medicines

are fixed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95). The trade margin to retailers in respect of Scheduled formulations is fixed at 16%. Prices of non-Scheduled medicines are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

Printing prices of life-saving drugs

†1809. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to print the prices of life saving drugs on their packing along with sales tax so that common people may not face any difficulty regarding the prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) The Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO 95) does not distinguish between drugs as life saving and others. Under the provisions of the DPCO 95, prices of both Scheduled and non-Scheduled formulations are printed as "retail pirce not to exceed.....local taxes extra". Representations have been received from time to time that the provisions of the DPCO 95 should be amended for printing the retail prices of all medicines inclusive of all taxes. Various options are beign considered for solving the problem, however, due to difference in types and rates of local taxes of states/local authorities, no proper solution has been found so far.

Norms for monitoring prices of drugs

1810. SHRI DHARM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that policy decision for altering the norms of

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.